
HOW DO NEW MEDIA CONTRIBUTE TO IMAGE-MAKING? THE CASE OF PERSONALIZED WEB-COMMUNICATIONS ON RUNET

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ABSTRACT

The paper discusses the impact of personalization on image-making activity through new media on Russian Web segment. The authors compare the target audiences and the content of various mass media and evaluate their image-making efficiency. The article concludes on perspectives of social networking media in making image of PR-subjects in terms of personalization. The latter is claimed to bring both risks and advantages which are discussed in the paper.

Key words: new media, image-making, convergence, informational content, target audience, network society

1. INTRODUCTION

Rush development and spreading of new communication and information technologies, touching upon all members of the society cannot but arises the research interest of specialists of various social and humanitarian approaches. Especially important today is synthesis of the obtained knowledge, to which the scientific community is oriented [1] and which will help, having summarized practice of traditional and new mass-media, to comprehend their "reality" in the perspective of social projects.

The new mass-media ("newest media", "new media") usually mean communication technologies and resources, based on the principles of Web 2.0 (the term was first conceptualized by T. O'Reilly [2]): interactivity, personal involvement of the addressee into production of content, "radical decentralization" of communication, "radical trust", convergence etc. As the rule, new media include social networks, blogs, wiki etc.

Notwithstanding the fact that in global science during the recent five years there are active discussions conducted as regards change of platforms Web 2.0 with new communicative resources (for example, [3]), for the Russian segment of Internet technologies of new media in Web 2.0 format by the present day remain the most actual and in some cases even "newest", i.e. those, which potential just starts being mastered by the participants of communication and, in particular, by image-makers.

The nature of influence of mass-media at the public conscience depends on how they fit into the modern model of the society, which has exhausted itself as the informational and has transformed into the network [4]. This was facilitated by, first of all, spreading of Internet, having raised the influence of electronic mass-media at the public conscience and at every individual at the cost of increased operation and interactivity.

Namely this factor of operation stimulates deployment of the process of convergence of traditional and newest mass-media in Russia. Russian TV-channels and newspapers open personal Internet-portals, and Internet-Mass-media sometimes add a printed source to themselves. Therewith both of them by all means possess accounts in social networks. At the same time appearance of network structures itself and creation of groups in them based on this or that motivation – is both – a technological, and a content division of channels of communication for various social communities, united by similar cultural valuables, worldview orientations and, finally, the language of communication.

This factor in principle changes the approach to information submission: the so-called "fine adjustments" of the electronic mass-media are introduced as regards its recipient. High technologies, besides, contributed to maximum personalization of an electronic mass-media, which recognizes every its visitor by the name (account), tracing his interests and preferences by his clicks and trying to manage these interests by means of context advertising and context image influence. These possibilities are more and more aggressively used in image-making activity, the effectiveness of which depends on the selected mass communications and the content corresponding with their format.

The modern Russian consumer of information, having an ordinary Smartphone, receives maximum information, actually spending no time on its search. This information is diversified, showy and interesting for a consumer. It is a pleasure to receive this information, as not only the content, but also the process itself of its obtaining is adjusted for the personal usability of the consumer.

The task of this article is to analyze the nature of influence of the new mass-media on perspectives of image-making activity in Russia.

2. METHODS

The modern "hypersociality" – is the "network individualism", that is a system. When a human himself elects, "to which namely network structure, to which extent and in which form he is ready to join" [4]. Taking this into account, the mass-media strive to contact as much as possible with the audience via the guest books, forums, providing possibilities to place comments, correct mistakes, send photos and videos, "post" information from the mass-media to social networks and others.

A great set of "live" settings permits building mosaic editorial policy, openly attracting to news making all who wish this, as well as permitting promotion imaging information via "reposts" of the internet-users. For the imaging purposes also

columnistics in authorship blogs is actively used today. Vivid examples for this – Internet-projects of the “Echo of Moscow”, “Moscow komsomolets”, “Snob”, “Esquire” (Russian version) in many other mass-media, which dilute their content with the subjective author information on someone’s behalf, permitting themselves to indirectly develop topics and points of view, going behind the frameworks of the official format [5]. These and other tools of image influence were traced by us with the help of *content-analytical procedures*, as well as with the help of *standardized non-participant observation* in Russian federal and regional traditional and newest mass-media, including printed publications and Internet-portals of newspapers “Kommersant”, “Izvestia”, “Komsomolskaya pravda”, “Rossiyskaya gazeta”, “Moscow news” etc., as well as at the pages of Russian mass-media in social networks “VKontakte”, “Facebook”, “Odnoklassniki”, “Twitter” and such Internet-resources as www.lenta.ru, www.bel.ru and some others.

3. MAIN PART

The analysis shows that at its way to the consumer the new mass-media form their special language [6], which shall be “adopted-” by imagemakers in the course of positioning of the object and the orientation at effective promotion of information about him [7]. In the course of forming and promotion of image information the special “clip conscience” of the audience shall be taken into account [8], formed by Internet. If for the image influence namely this audience is selected, preference shall be given to content, in which visual images and emotions dominate, for example, “publics” of home video popular today, records from video recorders or sections in the mood of “mobile reporter”. At the same time, from the new mass-media deep content analysis of information goes. This is explained by the fact that interactivity is based on momentous reactions – “like – dislike”, as the result of which they have put a “like”, put to “blacklist”, switched into another channel or moved to a different web-site. This way, the most effective becomes one of most simple and described long ago technologies – emotional. As W. Lippmann wrote, “the crowd shall be influenced by way of strengthening feelings and reducing the essence. The choice shall be narrowed to several variants. The ideas shall be separated from emotional symbols” [9].

It is necessary to note that traditional Russian mass-media actively use this technology. Newspapers and magazines, including at their Internet-resources in Runet, as well as some TV-programs fill the informational analytical niche by the still demanded part of the audience. Besides, namely traditional mass-media have built their relations with the audience, based on creation of long-term affections to a certain format, submission of information, authors and sections. Today these mass-media keep such approach, thus therewith make stakes on specialty. These mass-media today remain demanded, but by their availability, price, content and portrait of the target audience they acquire the feature of elitism. This fact confirms the postulate about the fact that a dichotomous pair “elite-mass” has social and economic basis, in accordance with which the “elite” shall be thought as belonging to privileged social groups, sharing a special, hermetic system of tastes, norms and traditions, and the “mass” – as inherent to wide, non-differentiated layers of the society with “averaged tastes, norms and traditions.

At the same time, in conditions of network society it becomes possible to use cultural texts simultaneously as “elite” and as “mass”. This task shall be carried out at the cost of convergence of mass-media. Today, for example, traditional mass-media actively use content formed by the new mass-media, the information for forming personal content appearing in social networks in the customs format for these audience of these mass-media. The technology of “flow” of information as the result of media-convergence gives maximum image effect. Taking into account personalization of electronic mass-media, possibility of selection of the necessary accounts and tracing reaction of the audience by clicks, it is possible not only to manage the image of the object, but also to operatively prevent or mediate image risks. As in relations “electronic mass-media – consumer” a consumer takes a passive niche, thus mass-media deeply penetrate into personal space of a consumer. Here it is necessary to carefully evaluate all the peculiar features stated below exclusively as democratic achievements. It is needed to realize that without elementary media literacy [10] cognitive influence on the consumer of the content may turn out to be negative: information openness often wickedly turns out with preconception and under a personal opinion of a well-know blogger the ideology of destructive community is given.

A negative side on the whole of constructive relations of a consumer and electronic mass-media becomes the original “recruiting” by mass-media environment namely of this part of the audience, which does not possess the necessary immunity level, which means is easily liable to cognitive influence from the side of electronic mass-media.

At the same time, as the results of research show, the more diversified the choice is of easily accessible information resources in Runet, to which electronic mass-media belong, and such channels of communication as social networks, moreover short-term become contacts of the audience with these resources, but exclusively emotional reactions, to which the stakes are put by the network resources, do not provide strong and long-term relations. The other thing is – the Russian mass-media: if the preference to them with the Russian audience have already formed, then it becomes steady for a long period, which is confirmed, in particular, by the subscription to newspapers, magazines and certain TV-channels. However Russian audience of traditional mass-media, though more conservative, but the same as network communities, more and more are divided into groups under interests and information needs.

4. CONCLUSION

This way, adequate image-making activity in the modern Russian media-space is based on the principle of convergence and shall be oriented at all types of mass-media, at the same time taking into account, the fact that the created image in social networks shall not contradict with the image, formed in traditional mass-media.

5. RESULTS

The performed research permits to formulate the following conclusions: (1) Russian electronic and the newest mass-media (Internet-agencies, social networks, blogosphere, network games) are often used to attract attention to the subject of image positioning from the side of mass audience; due to personalization they purposefully influence the target audience groups; (2) the new mass-media in Runet are effectively used to increase the brand recognition, popularization of its characteristics, as well as to form newsbreaks, which are the basis for analytics in traditional mass-media; (3) traditional Russian mass-media (newspapers, magazines, special-purposed TV and radio programs) often perform communicative

function of formation of steady perception of the subject of image positioning in the conscience of certain, including elite groups.

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